

Testimony of Mitchell J. Tropin
April 13, 2023
Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget

Good evening, Council Chair and council members,

My name is Mitchell Tropin and I am vice president for higher education with SEIU Local 500. We represent part time faculty at Montgomery College, where I also teach.

I urge the council to fully fund the college's proposed budget for the next fiscal year. The college's vision and performance has made it worthy of full funding.

Before I go further, I must mention something that burns my toast. People seem to get the name of my college wrong. They keep referring to MC as Montgomery Community College. That's not right. There is a college with that name in the Philadelphia suburbs.

Even more, I object to calling MC a community college because that name does not do it justice. We have gone far beyond the parameters of what most community colleges accomplish.

If anything, our name should be Montgomery *Communities* College. MC has done an amazing job of serving not only traditional academic communities but nontraditional ones as well.

We strive to meet the needs of our students by providing programs aimed at helping numerous student communities. Including LGBTQ+ students, students of color, students from foreign nations, students who are dealing with mental health issues, and students with food security issues—to name but a few.

We have expanded the college's role by serving a new community of students— high school students who participate in our early enrollment programs. They are earning college credits while getting their high school diplomas.

We are always seeking ways to better help county residents as evidenced by plans to establish a center in East County with a possible fourth campus. Our workforce development programs are expanding training opportunities so county residents can compete for better paying jobs.

MC also is unique nationally for its support of part time faculty, receiving national recognition and an award last month for its efforts to help adjunct faculty achieve student success.

Let me conclude by sharing something special that shows MC is expanding the notion of what a two-year college can do. A few weeks ago, MC faculty spent a week working with Montgomery County Police cadets in a brand-new program of Community-Informed Education and Training.

Cadets were shown to be better prepared to tackle a variety of real-world policing challenges after completion of this program at MC. They were given guidance on successfully working with

members of the communities they serve, even training on how to listen better. I want to thank Council Member Will Jawando for appearing at the opening program. Here is another clear example of MC working with another county institution for the benefit of every resident.

In conclusion, a rose is a rose and Montgomery College by any name you call it is a tremendous institution. With a fully funded budget, the good work it does will continue to benefit our residents. That is good for all of Montgomery County. Thank you.